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THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR :—
"No, Sir. I do not think the Government have expressed any view on the matter."

Water-supply in the Salem municipal area.

* 164 *Q.*—SRI S. B. ADITYAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether any, and, if so, what schemes are pending for the improvement of the water-supply in Salem Municipal area; and

(*b*) how soon the schemes are expected to be carried out?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" (*a*) Only one scheme called the Salem (Mettur) Water-supply Scheme is in progress now. The following items of works are still pending :—

(i) Installation of a pumping plant at the Mettur Reservoir.

(ii) Construction of a service reservoir at Ammapet.

Besides this, a scheme for remodelling the water-supply distribution system and improving the present scheme is pending.

" (*b*) Items (i) and (ii) mentioned above are expected to be completed in about two years. The delay is due to the difficulty in obtaining the necessary pumping plant, which has to be obtained from abroad. As regards the scheme for the remodelling of the distribution system and improvements to the present scheme the financial aspect of the problem is under examination in consultation with the municipal council. It is now too early to say when this scheme can be completed."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" Will the Government be pleased to give a high priority for these schemes in view of the fact that sometimes as many as one hundred persons wait at a single tap in Salem? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The firm which has undertaken to supply the plant had said that it would take twelve months' time to deliver the plant due to difficult conditions prevailing in England and six months' time to erect it and set it in working order."

Breaking out of cholera in Madura and Trichinopoly.

* 165 *Q.*—SRI S. B. ADITYAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether cholera has recently broken out as an epidemic in Madura and Trichinopoly;

(*b*) the number of deaths due to cholera in the Province, since 31st August 1947 (weekwar);

(*c*) whether cholera is a preventable disease;

(*d*) whether the Government have taken any, and what, steps to eradicate the disease out of the Province;

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(e) whether the Government provide any financial assistance or render any help to the dependants of those who die of cholera; and

(f) whether the Government take any responsibility to compensate the families whose bread-winners are attacked by the disease?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" (a) Yes.

" (b) A statement [a] showing the number of deaths weekwar in the Province since 31st August 1947 is placed on the table.

" (c) Yes.

" (d) There are already Statutory rules for the prevention and control of cholera in municipal and non-municipal areas. The Director of Public Health is also issuing from time to time further instructions to the local health staff regarding the control measures to be taken. The following are the usual preventive measures :—

(i) Chlorination of water supplies;
(ii) Protection of water-supplies from contamination;
(iii) Disinfection of infected articles, houses and their surroundings;
(iv) Isolation and treatment of cholera patients;
(v) Anti-cholera inoculation;
(vi) Improvement of conservancy and sanitation of the infected localities.

The Director of Public Health or the Assistant Director of Public Health are frequently inspecting the infected localities to give necessary personal guidance and instructions to the local staff and to ensure that all necessary measures are taken to control the epidemic.

" (e) & (f) The answer is in the negative."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I know whether the Government have any definite plans and, if so, in what space of time do the Government hope to eradicate this disease from the Province? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" It is not possible under the present conditions to eradicate cholera in the Province. Every five or six years, we have cycles of widespread cholera in an epidemic form. So long as we are not able to provide protected water-supply and better sanitation in urban and rural areas, it is not possible to eradicate the disease."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" Are the Government aware that neighbouring countries such as Malaya, Sumatra and Java have succeeded in eradicating the disease from their respective countries? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" It may be. We will have to launch a big programme for providing water-supply and improving sanitation all over the Province. Till then we cannot eradicate the disease."

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[a] Printed as Appendix VI on page 49 infra.

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SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" As the Government admit that this is a preventible disease will they consider the desirability of giving some compensation or financial aid to the families who suffer by reason of this disease?"

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" May I just intervene, Sir? The Government have got a remedy to offer to everyone who wants to avail himself of it. Inoculation against cholera is the universal practice and it is given freely to all those who seek for it. Whenever any area is affected with cholera, the Government declare that area to be cholera-affected and publish a notification advising the people to get themselves inoculated and the health authorities are asked to make every endeavour to prevent the cholera from spreading by inoculating the people and treating the affected cases and it is in that way that this Government is tackling the problem of the prevalence of cholera and at the same time preventing it as far as possible."

SRI P. R. K. SARMA :—" Will the Government give compensation in cases of death due to the non-availability of inoculation and lack of proper sanitary and water-supply facilities?"

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" The question of compensation does not arise, Sir. The Government always provide vaccine and give inoculation to people in the affected locality as a preventive measure. It may be that some people do not avail themselves of it or that circumstances have prevailed that inoculation could not be done. The Government cannot, in anyway, hold themselves liable in cases of death."

SRI P. R. K. SARMA :—" May I know, Sir, whether it is not a fact that the outbreak of cholera, especially this year was due to the inadequate supply of rations?"

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" Certainly not, Sir. It reveals an woeful lack of knowledge of cholera altogether."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I know, Sir, why the Government are not able to do something to eradicate cholera altogether from this Province, while even Colonial administrations have been able to do so."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" The hon. Member must tell the Government what the Colonial Governments have done in this matter before asking the question."

THE HON. SRI T. S. S. RAJAN :—" May I inform the hon. Member that the prevalence of cholera in this Province is diminishing very rapidly. There have been years in which we never had any cholera and the enormous amount of work that has been done by the health authorities, both by means of education and propaganda and also by the provision of improved water-supply has been responsible for this progress. During festivals and on other occasions when a large number of people gather together in any place, the Government take necessary precautions to see that the water is chlorinated and

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proper sanitary arrangements are made. The fear that people entertain that if they go to festivals or gather in congregations, they would be infected with cholera has become a thing of the past. People now-a-days can freely congregate in any place they like, or go to any pilgrim centres they like without any fear of being infected with cholera. But if, in spite of all these precautions, cholera occurs occasionally anywhere, it is due partly to the ignorance of the people and partly to the lack of water-supply. If the areas to which the hon. Gentleman refers were compact areas, it can be controlled and managed much more easily, but in a place like Madura, it does take a little more time to control it. All the same, the Government are quite aware of their responsibilities in this matter and they are doing all they can, with the resources at their command, to eradicate this disease as early as possible.''

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" Do the Government think that infection is brought from other Provinces? ''

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" It is brought only in the wake of pilgrims who crowd together in a particular place.''

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I know, Sir, why measures could not be taken for the compulsory inoculation of all people who come to our borders from other Provinces, just like the neighbouring countries which adopt quarantine measures in respect of small-pox? ''

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" Our borders are so large and so wide that it will be impossible to undertake any such task, Sir. And there are a number of main roads in our Province through which people can come and the inoculation of each and everyone of these people coming to this Province, to prevent cholera, will not be an easy task. But I may inform the hon. Gentleman that the inoculation of people to visit pilgrim centres is in vogue in this Province to-day and that is why the incidence of cholera has gone down a great deal.''

IV.—MESSAGES FROM THE ASSEMBLY.

MR. PRESIDENT :—"I have to announce to the House that in accordance with rule 94 of the Madras Assembly Rules, I have received messages from the Hon. the Speaker of the Madras Legislative Assembly transmitting copies of the following Bills as passed by the Assembly :—

(1) On 26th November 1947. The Madras Probation of Offenders (Amendment) Bill, 1947 (L.A. Bill No. 34 of 1947).

The Opium and Dangerous Drugs (Madras Amendment) Bill, 1947 (L.A. Bill No. 35 of 1947).